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ABSTRACT

This book examines the powerful and motivating kinds of learning that take place when one is in the presence of enemies, such as oppressive employers, bigots, racists, or polluters. It is intended for people interested in education for social action, community development, and political change. The book looks at this kind of learning in aboriginal adult education, trade union training, feminist adult education, peace education, and environmental education. It critically reviews some currently fashionable adult education theories, concluding that a number are simply too nice, too unfocused, too inward looking, or too mechanical to help people who are engaged in social action. It canvasses the ideas of a number of adult educators who have confronted and helped their learners confront exploitation, imposition, and injustice. It proposes some processes that adult educators might use to help people learn how to identify, define, and then deal with their enemies. The argument is developed in clusters of ideas. Links are made using songs, anecdotes, a poem, and quotation from a play. Personal accounts are interwoven with analysis and extensive reference to the literature of adult education. The afterword examines the author's own position in relation to adult education, social action, and violence. Appendixes contain a 140-item bibliography, glossary, and index. (YLB)

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